

Message Text

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ACTION OES-07

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E.O. 11652: N/A
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SUBJECT: AFTERMATH OF MAJOR EARTHQUAKE IN JAPAN

1. EARTHQUAKE, MAGNITUDE 7 ON RICHTER SCALE, HIT JPAN'S
EASTERN SEABOARD JANUARY 14, TAKING TOLL OF 20 LIVES,
DAMAGING MANY HOUSES, AND PARALYZING RAILWAYS AND ROADS
ON IZU PENINSULA, BUT MOST SEISMOLOGISTS HERE ARE AGREED
THAT HIS WOULD NOT BE PRECURSOR OF ANY STRONGER QUAKE
LIKE "GREAT TOKAI EARTHQUAKE" PREDICTED BY SOME SCIENTISTS
TO HIT TOKAI AND KANTO REGIONS IN NEAR FUTURE. "NO SIGNS
HAVE BEEN OBSERVED THAT WOULD MAKE LATEST TREMOR DIFFERENT
FROM PAST PERIODIC QUAKE," SAID PROF. RIKITAKE OF TOKYO
INST. OF TECHNOLOGY. HIS OPINION WAS SHARED BY
DR. HAGIWARA, CHAIRMAN OF COORDINATING COMMITTEE FOR
EARTHQUAKE PREDICTION,WHO SAID THERE HAD BEEN MANY WEAK
TREMORS IN OSHIMA ISLAND-IZU AREA SINCE LAST NOV.
AND LATEST ONE WAS PART OF SAME SEISMIC ACTIVITY.
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COMMITTEE PREDICTED THAT AFTERSHOCKS UP TO MAGNITUDE
6 MAY CONTINUE FOR ABOUT TWO WEEKS, BUT RULED OUT
POSSIBILITY THAT A MAJOR QUAKE WILL FOLLOW.

2. MEANWHILE, JAPAN METEOROLOGICAL AGENCY (JMA)
HAS ANNOUNCED AMBITIOUS PLAN TO ESTABLISH COMPREHENSIVE
NATIONAL INFORMATION NETWORK ON SEISMIC ACTIVITY WITH

GOAL OF PRODUCING DAILY QUAKE REPORTS TO FACILITATE
EARLY FORECASTING OF MAJOR EARTHQUAKES. PLAN CALLS
FOR SEISMOMETERS LOCATED THROUGHOUT JAPAN TO BE LINKED
TO JMA AND MAJOR REGIONAL WEATHER OBSERVATORIES IN JAPAN.
INFORMATION FLOWING INTO THESE STATIONS WILL BE AT ONCE
ANALYZED BY COMPUTERS TO DETERMINE CENTER AND MAGNITUDE
OF TREMOR. MODEL OF NATIONAL NETWORK WILL BE INITIALLY
SET UP IN TOKAI AREA. SEISMOMETERS, ANGLE METERS AND
DISTORTION MEASURING METERS HAVE ALREADY BEEN LINKED
TO SUPPLY CONSTANT STREAM OF INFORMATION TO JMA.

3. APART FROM LOSS OF LIVES AND DAMAGE TO STRUCTURES
AND MEANS OF TRANSPORT, SATURDAY'S EARTHQUAKE HAS HAD
UNUSAL KIND OF IMPACT ON THE ENVIRONMENT: GOLD REFINING
SLUDGE CONTAINING SODIUM CYANIDE FLOWED INTO SMALL RIVERS
FROM RESERVOIR AND EVENTUALLY REACHED SURUGA BAY, TO
POSE SERIOUS DANGER TO MARINE RESOURCES, AFTER DIRT-FILL
RETAINING DAMS COLLAPSED DURING THE EARTHQUAKE. DAMS
HAD BEEN RATED FIRST CLASS IN TERMS OF SAFETY IN
NATIONWIDE CHECK CONDUCTED IN 1974.

4. THE EARTHQUAKE WAS ANTICIPATED NEITHER BY MAN NOR
BY ANIMAL. CATFISH, KEPT FOR SPECIAL OBSERVATION
PURPOSES AT SEVERAL FISHERIES LABORATORIES, ON THE
WHOLE REMAINED MOTIONLESS AND UNPERTURBED BEFORE AND
DURING THE EARTHQUAKE, BELYING THE TRADITIONAL ORIENTAL
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BELIEF IN THEIR ABILITY TO FORETELL EARTHQUAKES.
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